

## Possible signs and indicators of physical abuse

Bumps and bruises don't necessarily mean a child is being physically abused – all children have accidents, trips and falls.

There isn't one sign or symptom to look out for and children may try to conceal injuries. But if a child often has injuries, there seems to be a pattern or the explanation doesn't match the injury, then this should be investigated.

<b>Bruises</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commonly on the head but also on the ear or neck or soft areas – the abdomen, back and buttocks.</li> <li>• Defensive wounds commonly on the forearm, upper arm, back of the leg, hands or feet.</li> <li>• Clusters of bruises on the upper arm, outside of the thigh or on the body.</li> <li>• Bruises with dots of blood under the skin.</li> <li>• A bruised scalp and swollen eyes from hair being pulled violently.</li> <li>• Bruises with dots of blood under the skin.</li> <li>• A bruised scalp and swollen eyes from hair being pulled violently.</li> <li>• Bruises in the shape of a hand or object.</li> </ul>
<b>Burns or scolds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be from hot liquids, hot objects, flames, chemicals or electricity.</li> <li>• On the hands, back, shoulders or buttocks; scalds may be on lower limbs, both arms and/or both legs.</li> <li>• A clear edge to the burn or scald.</li> <li>• Sometimes in the shape of an implement, such as a circular cigarette burn.</li> <li>• Multiple burns or scalds.</li> </ul>
<b>Bite marks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usually oval or circular in shape</li> <li>• Visible wounds, indentations or bruising from individual teeth.</li> </ul>
<b>Fractures or broken bones</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fractures to the ribs or the leg bones in babies.</li> <li>• Multiple fractures or breaks at different stages of healing.</li> </ul>
<b>Other injuries and health problems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scarring</li> <li>• Effects of poisoning such as vomiting, drowsiness or seizures.</li> <li>• Respiratory problems from drowning, suffocation or poisoning.</li> </ul>